

Vermont Public Library Compensation and Staffing Survey: Frequently Asked Questions

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Who is putting out the Public Library Compensation & Staffing Survey?

The Public Library Compensation and Staffing Survey is being organized and released by the [Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont](#). The compensation and staffing survey is part of the Working Group's charge to study "staffing levels at Vermont libraries, whether staffing levels are sufficient to meet community needs, whether library staff compensation and benefits are sufficient, how libraries rely on volunteers, and what resources are available for workforce development and training of library staff." The survey is being released in partnership with the [Constructive Disruption](#) consultancy, who are responsible for facilitating the survey and analyzing the resulting data, and the Vermont Department of Libraries, which is providing access to its survey platform and administrative support for this project.

The survey questions were initially developed by the Working Group and revised in consultation with Constructive Disruption.



What will happen with the results of the survey?

The information each public library submits to the survey will be analyzed by Constructive Disruption and presented to the Working Group Chair and the full Working Group at its meeting in September 2023. The results will ultimately be included in the Working Group's report, scheduled to be delivered to House and Senate Committees on Education in late 2023.

What is the survey hoping to accomplish?

The Public Library Compensation and Staffing Survey is intended to be a comprehensive survey of compensation and staffing levels in municipal and incorporated public libraries in Vermont. The survey will benchmark current staffing and compensation levels at public libraries in Vermont to meet information needs identified by the Working Group.

The primary purpose of the survey and the resulting analysis and report is to inform recommendations from the Working Group to the State of Vermont legislature. The information from the survey and the Working Group's report may be used to aid public library boards in determining staffing levels and compensation in Vermont's public libraries.

The Working Group engaged an independent consultant in order to obtain reliable and statistically relevant data upon which the Working Group can base recommendations to the Vermont legislature related to:

- Current staffing levels at municipal and incorporated public libraries in Vermont.
- Current staffing compensation levels and benefits for the positions of interest at municipal and incorporated public libraries in Vermont.

Who should complete the Public Library Compensation and Staffing Survey?

The survey should be completed by the library director.

If you work together as a staff to collect information for the survey, the library director should be the one filling out the survey.

If a library does not answer the survey within the open survey period, Constructive Disruption may reach out to the library's Board of Trustees to complete the survey. Each library should only respond to the survey once.



Is the survey confidential?

Yes! While we are collecting specific details about your library to help ensure the diversity of libraries in our state are represented in the data collected, this information will not be shared.

The survey is in compliance with the salary survey "[safety zone](#)" guidelines established by the US Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission in 1996. Under these guidelines, information collected must be aggregated in such a way that an individual participant's answers can not be determined, so that data cannot be attributed in a way that reveals the original source of information.

What do I need to be ready to take the survey?

You may want to review our [Get Ready guide](#), which goes over information you need to fill out the survey.

In brief:

- We recommend you print out or review a [PDF copy of the survey](#) and collect the data for your answers ahead of time. You may even want to write down your answers on the PDF copy of the survey to make it quicker to fill out online.
- Some questions in the survey require detailed information you may not have immediately available in your financial documents.
- If you're completing the survey in real time, remember:
 - You'll want to set aside at least an hour of uninterrupted time in order to fill in the survey.
 - If you leave the survey unfinished — for example, if you take a break of more than 10 minutes in the middle of filling it out — your survey will time out and you will have to start over.
 - You must fully complete the survey in one go and submit in order for your answers to be recorded.

We do not recommend simultaneously gathering information and filling out the survey, as many questions might require research and you will risk the survey timing out.



How long will it take to complete the survey?

Much of the time you will need to complete the survey is in gathering the information you'll need to input. We suggest setting aside two to three hours to gather the information, with that time spread over multiple days well ahead of when you plan to fill out the survey, as you may need to leave time to hear back from others with information you need.

We recommend setting aside one hour for the actual survey, so you have plenty of time to input the data and are able to fill out the survey without interruption.

What if I need help on specific questions in the survey?

We have guides for that! Please see:

- Detailed Guide to Section B: Staffing Levels and Compensation [\[link\]](#)
- Detailed Guide to Section C: Benefits [\[link\]](#)

What if I am not sure my survey went through, or I want to review my answers?

Once you complete and submit your answers to the survey, the person who submitted it will receive a copy of their submission via the survey platform. You may want to save this report, as it will be an excellent resource for questions you may have in the future about your staffing and benefits.

What else can I do to help with the Compensation and Staffing Survey?

After you fill out your library's survey, why not reach out to one or more colleagues to see if they have completed their survey? Hearing from each of our 185 public libraries in this study is important to ensure the findings are representative and useful as both a picture of the current state of staffing and compensation as well as for advocating in the future. The Working Group hopes to have an 80% response rate, so your help in supporting colleagues in other libraries to complete the survey is essential.



Who is Constructive Disruption?

[Constructive Disruption](#) is a woman-owned consultancy firm based in Portland, Oregon, which focuses on strategic planning, community engagement, needs assessment, evaluation efforts, organizational development, and change management.

The Public Library Compensation and Staffing Survey project is led for Constructive Disruption by Stephanie Chase and Judah Hamer. Longtime Vermont library staff may recognize these names — Stephanie and Judah were two of the founders of the [Green Mountain Library Consortium](#), along with Lucinda Walker of Norwich Public Library.

